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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIJING 000203

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EAP, G, DRL, AND DRL/IRF

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/22/2019

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [KIRF](#) [CH](#)

SUBJECT: TIBETAN "SERF EMANCIPATION DAY" DEMARCHE DELIVERED

REF: STATE 5542

Classified By: Acting Political Minister Counselor Ben Moeling.
Reasons 1.4 (B/D).

11. (C) The Charge delivered reftel points to MFA North American and Oceanian Affairs Department Director General Zheng Zeguang on January 22. The "Serf Emancipation Day" holiday, the Charge stressed, would not serve to improve the situation in Tibet and instead would only exacerbate tensions.

12. (C) Zheng responded that "one cannot deny" that "before liberation" Tibet had serfs and that these serfs were emancipated. Members of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) legislature, as the representatives of the people of Tibet, have the "full right" to create such a holiday. China, Zheng continued, appreciates the USG's recognition that Tibet is a part of China. The United States should not allow Tibet-related issues to interfere in U.S.-China relations. China is "following closely" the reactions of the Dalai Lama and his followers "to various issues." China will continue to engage with the Dalai Lama "to discuss his future" and to discuss the possibility of a future visit by his representatives. Nevertheless, the Dalai Lama and his followers must "show sincerity." "Violence and splittist activity will only expose the true nature of the Dalai Lama and his followers."

13. (C) The Charge pushed back, noting that the Dalai Lama has "ruled out" the use of violence. China, the Charge emphasized, should engage in substantive dialogue with the Dalai Lama to achieve real stability. Taking actions such as declaring a "Serf Emancipation Day" holiday will reduce stability, inflame the situation in Tibetan areas of China and could damage the PRC's international image and reputation.
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